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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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***Richmond County Sheriff's Department Narcotics Investigator and former
Deputy Sheriff Indicted for Narcotics and Extortion Offenses***

AUGUSTA: Richard S. Thompson, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Georgia, announced today that the Grand Jury for the Southern District of Georgia, sitting in Savannah, has returned a seven count indictment against Richmond County Sheriff's Department Narcotics Investigator **Ralph Tyrone Williams, 36**, of Augusta, and former Richmond County Deputy Sheriff **Joseph Ellick, 34**, of Deerfield Beach, Florida formerly of Augusta, on February 11, 2002.

Williams has been charged in Count One, a 21 U.S.C. § 846, 841(a)(1)(A) cocaine conspiracy offense, in Count Two, a 21 U.S.C. § 846, 841(a)(1)(A) cocaine conspiracy offense, in Count Three, a 21 U.S.C. § 846, attempt to possess with intent to distribute cocaine offense, and in Counts Five and Six, 18 U.S.C. § 1951 conspiracy to interfere with commerce by threats offenses.

Ellick has been charged in Count One, a 21 U.S.C. § 846, 841(a)(1)(A) cocaine conspiracy offense, in Count Four, a 21 U.S.C. § 846, attempt to possess with intent to distribute cocaine offense, and in Count Seven, a 18 U.S.C. § 4 misprision of a felony offense.

Counts One and Two are punishable by not less ten years nor more than life imprisonment, a fine of not more than \$4,000,000 or both, supervised release of not less than

five years, and a mandatory assessment of \$100.

Counts Three and Four are punishable by not more than twenty years, a fine of not more than \$2,000,000 or both, supervised release of not less than three years, and a mandatory assessment of \$100.

Counts Five and Six are punishable by not more than twenty years imprisonment, a fine of not more than \$250,000.00, or both, not more than five years supervised release, and a \$100.00 special assessment.

Count Seven is punishable by not more than three years imprisonment, a fine of not more than \$250,000.00, or both, not more than one year supervised release, and a \$100.00 special assessment

The indictment is a culmination of a two and one-half year investigation conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Drug Enforcement Administration, and the Richmond County Sheriff's Office. Lead agents are FBI Special Agents John A. Parrish and Anthony C. DePrizio and DEA Special Agent Patrick Clayton. Mr. Thompson stressed that an indictment is only an accusation and not evidence of guilt. The defendants are entitled to a fair trial, in which it will be the government's burden to prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

The government is represented by Assistant U. S. Attorneys John T. Garcia and Lee H. Little.

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